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RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 ISLAMABAD 003944

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: FATA AND NWFP: WEEKLY INCIDENTS OF TALIBANIZATION,
DECEMBER 5 - DECEMBER 11

REF: A. PESHAWAR 0531
[1](#)B. PESHAWAR 0527

Classified By: Ambassador Anne W. Patterson, Reasons 1.4(B),(D).

Introduction:

[1](#)1. (C) Fighting decreased slightly in Bajaur during the second week of December because of the Eid holiday. Consulate contacts claimed that security forces were consolidating their gains in Bajaur during the week and had secured the road all the way to Nawagai, the town at the border of Bajaur and Mohmand agencies. Some fighting occurred in bordering Mohmand Agency, where security forces killed five militants on December 11. Inspector General of the Frontier Corps, MG Tariq Khan, announced on December 7 that the government would flush out militants and restore complete peace to Bajaur and Mohmand by the end of December. (Comment. Militant resilience and mobility make Khan's prediction of peace by the year's end overly optimistic. (See Ref. A.) End Comment.)

[1](#)2. (C) Militants continued their activities in the second week of December, attacking Peshawar throughout the week by exploding a car bomb near the historic Qissa Khwani Bazaar, killing 37, and launching three separate attacks on cargo terminals around Peshawar, burning hundreds of vehicles and NATO supplies headed for Afghanistan. (Ref. B) Press reports described local residents as "traumatized" by the constant gunfire and explosions. Some Consulate contacts speculated that the militants' immediate objective is most likely to interrupt supplies heading through the Khyber Pass, not to occupy Peshawar.

[1](#)3. (C) Consulate contacts from various Pakistani and foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as the Society for Protection of Rights of Child (SPARC), Sustainable Peace and Development Organization (SPADO), and Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO) have conveyed their recent decisions to decrease activities, especially field work, in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) due to growing militant attacks, threats, and deteriorating law and order.

[1](#)4. (C) A local press report stated that the ruling Awami National Party (ANP) was engaged in an "internal debate" on how to govern and

to fight the militancy. A special session of the NWFP Assembly will reportedly convene on December 16, for its sixth session, to discuss how to restore law and order.

Bajaur

15. (U) The following is a summary of events in Bajaur Agency, where the Pakistan military has been conducting military operations since August:

December 5: Security forces reportedly attacked militant positions in Nawagai and Mamoond tehsils, killing two.

December 6: Security forces reportedly killed one militant and claimed to destroy a number of hideouts.

December 7: Inspector General of the Frontier Corps, MG Tariq Khan, announced that the government would flush out militants and restore peace to Bajaur and Mohmand by the end of December.

NWFP

16. (U) The following incidents have occurred in the Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA) and settled areas of NWFP:

December 5, Peshawar: At least 37 people were killed and over 140 injured when a car bomb exploded at a crowded market near historic Qissa Khwani bazaar in Peshawar's Old City. (Ref. B) A later police

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investigation concluded that about 120 kilograms of "low quality" explosives was used and that militants chose the target area, near a Shi'a Imam Bargah. (Note. Imam bargahs are places of worship, social gathering and religious education for Shi'a Muslims. End note.) The Turi Association, a group of predominantly Shi'a tribesmen, built and managed the Pak Hotel complex, located at the bombing site. The Imam Bargah served as the spiritual headquarters of Turis living in Peshawar. Most of those killed and injured were congregants from Parachinar in Kurram Agency, many of them exiles from the sectarian violence there. According to the report, if the bomb had been intended to inflict maximum casualties, the militants would likely have detonated the bomb at a more crowded location and during busier morning or afternoon shopping hours.

December 5, Swat: Militants announced a unilateral ceasefire for the Eid ul Azha holiday, but reportedly burned a girls' middle school in Khwazakhela.

December 5, Bannu: Militants reportedly fired rockets at a police station, killing three policemen and injuring three others. The police then retaliated, reportedly killing two militants.

December 6, Swat: Despite the announcement of a unilateral ceasefire by militants the previous day, at least 26 people, including 13 militants and two security forces personnel, were reportedly killed in several incidents. Militants reportedly killed at least seven people, including a private secretary to a Member of the Provincial Assembly (MPA) and a law enforcement officer. A Muslim prayer leader was also reported abducted. Elsewhere, militants reportedly killed five men and a woman after accusing them of engaging in immoral activities.

December 6, Peshawar: ANP Senior Vice President Haji Adeel told reporters that the NWFP government had "lost control" of Swat.

December 7, Swat: Reports indicate that shopkeepers displayed banners instructing women not to visit the markets due to fears of retaliation from militants.

December 7, Peshawar: Up to 40 militants overpowered guards in attacks on two terminals in Peshawar's main Ring Road, setting fire to about 160 containers, including vehicles, supplies and other hardware destined for NATO forces in Afghanistan. (Ref. B) A later review by NWFP authorities indicated that the damage was exacerbated

by inadequate fire-fighting.

December 8, Peshawar: Militants burned nearly 100 vehicles, including jeeps and supply trucks, in an attack on a container terminal along the main overland supply route into Afghanistan. (Ref. B)

December 7, Swat: Militants reportedly abandoned some of their strongholds after holding talks with Qaumi Aman Jirga to avoid a military operation.

December 9, Swat: A bomb reportedly exploded during Eid celebrations on a busy street, killing a young boy and wounding four other children.

December 11, Peshawar: Dozens of militants reportedly fired more than 10 rockets and hurled grenades and petrol bombs at a cargo terminal, starting a fire that destroyed a tanker, two trucks and up to 12 containers destined for U.S. forces in Afghanistan.

December 11, Kohat: Militants reportedly blew up four cosmetic shops.

December 11, Swat: Rival militants groups reportedly clashed, with 200 followers of religious leader Pir Samiullah captured and five of their vehicles confiscated. (See septel)

FATA

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17. (U) The following is a roundup of incidents of Talibanization in the FATA and Frontier Regions:

December 5, Orakzai: A suicide bomber reportedly drove his explosive-laden car through the barrier of a Khassadar checkpoint at a jirga, killing ten and injuring 30 others. According to the Orakzai Political Agent, the victims were Shi'a.

December 5, North Waziristan: Militants reportedly killed a tribesman near the Afghan border, accusing him of spying for the U.S.

December 5, Lower Dir: Militants reportedly damaged several video and CD shops with three bombs in Timergara.

December 6, Khyber: Militants reportedly beheaded Sayed Razi Shah, a college principal, a leading Turi (Shi'a) tribesman, after kidnapping him the previous week (Note: The previous Talibanization cable reported the principal's kidnapping. End note.)

December 6, Mohmand: Militants attacked a Frontier Corps (FC) camp with rockets; no casualties were reported. Elsewhere, tribal elders called upon the government and militant groups to resolve their disputes through dialogue; it also announced that tribal traditions should not be disturbed in the name of development projects.

December 7, Khyber: Two Frontier Corps (FC) soldiers went missing after leaving the Khyber Border Coordination Center headed to Peshawar.

December 10, Orakzai: Militants reportedly blew up a kiosk for making telephone calls and a bridge, in two separate incidents.

December 11, Malakand: Militants reportedly blew up a shop in Bathkel alleged to possess a large quantity of wine.

December 11, Khyber: Security forces reportedly killed one Lashkar-i-Islam (LI) militant in Jamrud Bazaar, acting on the political administration's "shoot-at-sight" orders, as applied to those carrying heavy weapons.

December 11, Mohmand: Security forces reportedly killed five militants and injured seven others in Pandyalai tehsil, near the Agency headquarters.

Government Response

18. (U) This is a summary of government responses to "creeping Talibanization" according to press and consulate contacts:

December 7, Swat: Security forces and members of Kanju Peace Committee reportedly completed a search operation and reportedly cleared different areas of Kabal tehsil of militants.

December 9, Peshawar: Newspapers reported the arrest of Mustafa Kamal Kamran Hijrat, a leading suspect in organizing the December 7 and 8 attacks on three cargo terminals in Peshawar. Kamran is an Afghan national who served in Afghanistan's Taliban regime and now commands the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in Jamrud tehsil, Khyber Agency. Kamran's group is said to be loyal to Baitullah Mehsud. The Peshawar police chief did not confirm the arrest.

December 10, Swat: The Pakistani army reportedly airdropped Eid gifts from helicopters. The Eid gifts were distributed in various areas, including Kabal Tehsil, Matta Tehsil, Bara Bandai, Koza Bandai, and Mingora.

Grass Roots Efforts to Halt Talibanization

19. (U) The following events are examples of activities taken by local communities:

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December 11, Mohmand: The Haleemzai tribe jirga reportedly handed over the final seven suspects of 77 named; previously 70 of them had been transferred to the agency's political authorities.

December 11, Peshawar: The United Kingdom Department for International Development issued a report stating that development activities and service delivery can continue in relative safety in 18 of the 24 districts of the NWFP.